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ABSTRACT

A college reading improvement program (CRIP) at the University of South Florida was examined to determine if it was of benefit to the participating students. Sixty-five freshmen took part in the 15-week program which used individually planned programs and different methods and materials. Pretesting had shown these 65 students to be significantly inferior to the rest of the freshmen. At the end of the semester course, the students' progress was evaluated, and each CRIP student evaluated the course. Seventy-three percent of the CRIP students felt the program had helped them, and the fact that the CRIP group's grades were not proportionately better or worse than those of the NO-CRIP group suggests that most of these significantly inferior readers did benefit from the program. (NH)

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An Evaluation of a College Reading Improvement Program

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The problem of the study was to determine whether or not a college reading improvement program (CRIP) was of benefit to the students who participated in it. The procedural design was to solve the problem included analyzing pre-program test data, conducting a CRIP based on test data and student needs, having the students evaluate the program, and analyzing quality point ratios (QPR) at the end of a semester. No post-program reading tests were administered.

The minimum criterion of significance was the .05 level of confidence. The groups studied were a CRIP group, a university freshman class, a college freshman class, and a group (NO-CRIP) which did not participate in the CRIP. the CRIP group of forty-three males and twenty-two females averaged eighteen years of age, were all Roman Catholic, native-born, and middle class. The program was individualized, and different methods and materials were used. The program's duration was fifteen weeks, with one-hour classes which were held three times a week. Average student attendance was forty hours, and individual attention averaged three hours for each student.

Pre-program data, consisting of an entrance index (LEI), Nelson Denny Reading Test: Revised, Form A (NDRT:R), Wrenn Study Habits Inventory(WSHI), and Scholastic Aptitude Test, Verbal-Mathematical (SAT:V-M) were analyzed statistically. It was found that the CRIP group was significantly inferior statistically to all university freshmen, college freshmen, and NO-CRIP groups on

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most measures. The CRIP group test score intercorrelations were mostly significant, except that NDRT:R Rate mean scores did not correlate significantly with LEI, SAT-V, WSHI, and NDRT:R Comprehensive mean scores. It was found that : CRIP males scored significantly higher than CRIP females on the SAT-M; CRIP males had more and higher mean test intercorrelations than CRIP females; and CRIP females NDRT:R Rate and WSHI mean scores were not significantly correlated with any other measure; and males and females did not differ significantly in percentage of errors made on the NDRT:R or in placement in item analysis High, Middle, or Low groups.

The students evaluated the CRIP by use of a questionnaire devised for the study. Seventy-three per-cent of the group felt that the program had helped them. The most-liked material (54%) was the SRA Better Reading Book used with the AVR Rateometer, and the least-liked material (46%) was the Harvard Selections for Improving Speed of Comprehension.

A comparison of the pre-program reading test scores of the CRIP and NO-CRIP students who earned a place on a Dean's List (DL) or a Probation List (PL) was made. It was found that the total CRIP group, although significantly inferior readers, did not earn proportionately more higher or lower grades than did the NO-CRIP group. DL students were significantly better readers than PL groups. No significant differences were found between CRIP and NO-CRIP DL, or CRIP and NO-CRIP PL students' pre-program reading test scores. It was concluded that a majority of the CRIP students were helped by the program.